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**MAYOR EMANUEL INTRODUCES ORDINANCE  
TO CRACK DOWN ON CELL PHONE ROBBERIES**

*New ordinance aims to reduce violence by reducing the market for stolen cell phones*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chairman Edward Burke today introduced an ordinance to City Council designed to reduce cell phone robberies and crack down on the secondary market for stolen phones. The approach is to regulate the second-hand cell phone market to further diminish the value of stolen phones. The new ordinance is the city's latest public safety effort and aims to reduce cell phone robberies, and the violent crime that often comes with them.

"Cell phone robberies are a serious threat to public safety and a parent's peace of mind," said Mayor Emanuel. "We can make a difference when we aggressively go after anyone who thinks they can steal a phone to flip a profit, and we can prevent these crimes before they happen."

"Cell phone armed robberies are all too common in Chicago and commuters and pedestrians are increasingly aware that if they do not keep their devices out of view they could become the victim of an attack by a robber," said Chairman Burke. "This proposed ordinance takes several meaningful steps in making such a crime less attractive by cracking down on the sellers of stolen devices and mandating cross-checks with a database that tracks stolen cell phones."

Despite recent local and national regulatory efforts, the illegal market for stolen cell phones continues to grow. The Federal Communications Commission estimates that one in three robberies nationally involves the theft of a mobile device, and the cost on U.S. consumers is in the tens of billions of dollars. In 2016, 14,493 phones were reported lost or stolen in the city of Chicago. Stolen cell phones maintain their profitability due to their retained street value from the secondary black market. The Chicago Police Department (CPD) estimates that the average street value for a stolen cell phone is about \$100, and second-hand dealers are then able to resell those stolen phones through illegal channels for an even higher profit, depending on the phone model. Of course, the real toll on the public comes from the robberies and other violent crimes associated with cell phone theft. This ordinance aims to disrupt the secondary market for stolen cell phones at the point of sale, and thereby mitigating the violent crime associated with it.

"I applaud Mayor Emanuel's efforts to prevent cell phone robberies and to put a meaningful dent in the black market of these items, which are often stolen from their owners in armed encounters," said CPD Superintendent Eddie Johnson. "We saw the most dangerous effects of this recently where a Chicago police officer was shot while attempting to capture an offender who stole cell phones. By putting these common sense tools in place, we can reduce robberies and keep Chicagoans safe."

The new ordinance will contain a mix of new and strengthened regulations to help authorities track stolen cell phones and increase enforcement against those who profit from their unlawful sale, whether online or in-store. These include mandatory cross-checks with the stolen phone database to protect consumers, holding illegal cell phone dealers accountable through license revocation and confiscation of stolen cell phones at second-hand dealerships throughout the City, increased transparency and notification requirements and additional public education. A joint CPD/ Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) investigation team will increase efforts to target and eliminate problematic cell phone dealers pursuant to the current and newly enacted regulations.

“We here at BACP are determined to hold anyone accepting and re-selling stolen cellphones accountable,” said BACP Commissioner Rosa Escareno. “This is a public safety issue and businesses need to be responsive to the community they serve.”

This builds on the city’s 2014 ordinance that required those providing cell phone unlocking services to keep records on their customers and the device, as well as regulations of secondary sellers around record keeping and new licensure requirements.

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